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Evangelical Theological Seminary of Armenia - Class of 2000

On the 1700th Anniversary of Armenian Christianity Some Reflections on the Great Event

by Barkev N. Darakjian *

There are events and peoples in the history of nations which set most important and definitive milestones in their consciousness as well as in their national experience. The Christianization of Armenia became a turning point in the history of Armenia and the Armenians. After accepting Christianity as its national or State religion, Armenia was never the same religiously, culturally, and politically. It is futile to raise questions such as, what would have happened if our King, Tiridates the 3rd had not met the young missionary from Cesarea, had not employed him as his secretary, had not been informed that Gregory was none other than a son of Anak Barteve who had killed his father? What if the King had not fallen sick and had not been healed by that young missionary? We can also raise questions on the political situation in Armenia which may have affected the King's decision to endorse Christianity as the religion of his nation and State. We can even defy the conviction of our clergy and pious people that it was good for Armenia and the Armenian people to be converted to Christianity. But whatever queries we may raise, the fact remains that our nation became Christian in 294 A.D., 301 A.D., or 314 A.D. as some Armenian historians suggest.

It is unfortunate that we do not have any modern book on the Christian interpretation of Armenian history. Neither do we have a book on the history of Armenian Christian thought. Our people are being taught more about Armenian church history and tradition than about Jesus Christ the Savior and Redeemer. The Apostle says, "*For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*" (1st Cor. 2:2). This was the aim and purpose of the missionary apostles of Armenia. This was also the objective of Gregory the Illuminator. This means that our interpretation

of the Christianization of Armenia should be Christocentric rather than centered on Armenian culture, politics, or even on the church itself. This has to be our norm and criterion while we try to evaluate that great event. As Anselm, the great archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109) says, "I believe, in order that I may understand." Personal faith in Jesus Christ is of paramount importance if we want to understand the conversion of Armenia to Christianity.

The conversion of Armenia into Christianity was a process rather than an overnight accomplishment. The early seeds of the Christian faith were sowed by Jewish, Assyrian, and Greek indigenous or itinerant preachers. There were also quite a number of heretical teachers beside already existing pagan priests who continued their divergent activities during and after the Christianization of the land. While the palace and the Church were jointly working to banish pagan worship, new heresies were invading the land, such as Ebionitism (Jewish Christians who did not believe in the Divinity of Christ), Arianism, Nestorianism, Adoptionism, etc. (All four heresies emphasize the humanity of Jesus Christ). The sword of the King and the cross of Gregory the Illuminator worked hard to eliminate these heresies, with little success. It was St. Nерces the Great Catholicos (329-373), the great-great-grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, and the father of St. Sahag Catholicos, who instead of fighting the pagans and heretics, established a chain of Christian schools and educational centers. St. Nерces' methods proved to be more successful than the use of force applied by his predecessors. The lesson is obvious. The right education and preaching are more effective than the use of force to eliminate the unwanted cults from our homeland.

True evangelism, that is, preaching the Gospel of Salvation through Jesus Christ, is both a calling, and a means to spread the Christian faith. Gregory the Illuminator was a great evangelist, because he was a great believer. He was a man of prayer and action. His own person, like the Apostle Paul,

came second to his mission of evangelism. He evangelized because

he believed that he was sent to Armenia to evangelize; that was his calling. Even though he was a Parthian by race, he loved Armenia, having been brought up as an Armenian. Probably he had some foreboding about his fate in Armenia because of the existing ancestral feud (his father had killed the father of the then King Tiridates the 3rd of Armenia). It was sheer madness to enter into the service of the King who might one day be informed who he was; yet this fact did not prevent him from doing what he was called to do. And he actually paid the price by being tortured by the King, and being thrown in a dungeon where he remained thirteen long and dreadful years. He took it as his cross as well as his glory. He left behind him a model of a true evangelist to be imitated by his grandson, Gregorius, who was ordained by his father, Vertanes the Catholicos, as Catholicos of the Albanians. Young, energetic, and a puritan, Gregorius was so articulate in denouncing their sins, and preaching Christian love, charity, and mercy, that the local rulers became suspicious of his designs, which they thought, were devised by the Armenian King for ulterior motives. So the "Albanians caused Gregorius to be dragged to his death at a wild horse's tail..."

The Christian faith without social and humanitarian services will prove to be defective and fruitless. This is shown most clearly in the earthly life of our Lord. The Apostle Peter testifies to this in one of his speeches, saying "*You know about Jesus of Nazareth and how God poured out on him the Holy Spirit and power. He went everywhere, doing good and healing all who were under the power of the Devil, for God was with him*", Acts. 10:38. Jesus gave a similar testimony about himself when he said to his disciples during their last supper together, "*Who is greater, the one who sits down to*



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eat or the one who serves him? The one who sits down, of course. But I am among you as one who serves", Luke 22:27. Nerces the Great became a Catholicos of great virtues and good deeds. His high academic education and military training made him indispensable in the palace of the King. However, he will be remembered not only as a person of unusual skill and noble character, but mostly for being a caring and loving Shepherd of his flock. He was a reformer of the social structure and traditions of the country. The measures that he took to ameliorate the condition of his people would cover many pages. He planned and built hospitals for the sick, refuges for lepers, homes for the blind and lame, and asylums for orphans and widows. He put special emphasis and gave directives to enhance the role of the church in the civic and moral aspects of public life. Today, more than ever, we need centers for social and humanitarian service and action, be it in our Homeland or in the Diaspora, and the Church, all Armenian churches must assume their responsibilities following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lastly, we must never lose sight of the 5th century pioneers who became instrumental in establishing a truly Armenian Christianity in our Homeland. Their Christian faith, vision, devotion, and efforts made possible the invention of the Armenian alphabet which subsequently brought about the golden century of Armenian culture. We dare to affirm that without the timely and energetic initiatives that were taken by Sts. Mesrob Mashtots, Catholicos Sahag Barteve, King Vramshabuh, and a host of their faithful disciples and collaborators, we might have had a Christian church and a Christian people, but not the Armenian Church and Armenian Christianity. Even though we were for some time dependent on Greek, Assyrian, and Latin religious and cultural resources for our church liturgy, theology, and Christian apologetic literature, the Armenian scholars, endowed with a strong motivation, were not only capable to adapt those foreign materials, but were also quick to create indigenous worship materials and Armenian Christian literary works, of which the translation of the Bible into Armenian was their masterpiece. The Armenian alphabet and the Armenian language united the population of Armenia who were used to communicate with each other in different languages, such as Aramaic, Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and in vernacular Armenian.

From then on God was worshipped in Armenian, and the Armenian language became dominant in communication and education.

In all this, we thank God the Father in His Son, Jesus Christ, for His great love and mercy which moved the hearts of the Apostles, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, Gregory the Illuminator and the rest of His faithful messengers who made this great and historic event possible. Writing to the Church in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul says, *"At that time you were apart from Christ. You were foreigners and did not belong to God's chosen people....But now, in union with Christ*

Jesus you, who used to be far away, have been brought near by the death of Christ." Eph. 2:12,13. We believe that this is the greatest event of which we have to be mindful while celebrating the 1700th anniversary of Armenian Christianity. We should also thank God for all those who are presently engaged in the preparations for the oncoming celebrations. May all other considerations, be they ecclesiastical, cultural, political, or financial, occupy the back seats so that all glory be given to God, and His Son, Jesus Christ in whom, and for whom we shall hold all celebrations.□

AMAA CONTRIBUTES TO EARTHQUAKE RELIEF EFFORTS IN INDIA AND EL SALVADOR

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) donated an initial sum of \$10,000 to help the victims of the disastrous earthquakes that struck India and El Salvador in Central America recently.



The AMAA and the Armenian Evangelical Churches worldwide share the grief of those who are affected by these earthquakes. The AMAA has requested that Armenian Evangelical churches remember the victims of these catastrophes through prayers and special relief offerings. The offering will be added to AMAA's initial aid and will be channeled through the Wider Church Ministries of United Church of Christ, a longtime international colleague agency of the AMAA.

Rescue Teams in India counted for 20,000 deaths, which were confirmed nationwide. Thousands more were left homeless.

The earthquake that hit India on Friday, January 26, 2001, measured at 7.9 on the Richter scale by the U.S. Geological Survey, and is expected to cost the country billions of dollars in reconstruction costs. According to reliable sources, the earthquake in India is a major earthquake comparable to the 1988 earthquake in Armenia and the 1999 earthquake in Turkey. Officials in Anjar, a town to the south east of India, have estimated more than 5,000 people killed only in Anjar and its surroundings, including about 350 children who were trapped in a small alley during their parade to celebrate Republic Day.

The earthquake in El Salvador (January 13, 2001) comparatively was of a lesser magnitude, 7.6 on the scale, yet the devastation it caused was massive. More than 700 people were killed, about 3000 were injured and 38,000 homes were partially or totally destroyed. Ironically, a town called Armenia, 24 miles west of the capital, San Salvador, was heavily damaged.

The AMAA appeals to Armenian communities all over the world and to its members and friends to respond promptly and generously to the needs of the suffering people in India and El Salvador.

Those who wish to help may send their tax-deductible donations to the AMAA at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, New Jersey 07652, earmarked "India/El Salvador Earthquake Relief".□

Yes, I want to help the suffering people of India and/or El-Salvador. Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Ordination and Graduation Services in Armenia

Two historical events marked the last week of November 2000 for the Armenian Evangelical community in Armenia: pastoral ordinations in the Evangelical Church of Armenia, and the first graduation exercises of the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Armenia.

On Sunday, November 26, 2000, in the presence of more than four hundred dignitaries and well-wishers gathered in the House of the Architects Union in Yerevan, Hamlet Gureghian and Guevork Geuvorkian were ordained to ministry in the independent republic of Armenia. Rev. Rene Leonian, senior pastor of the Union of Evangelical Churches in Armenia, remarked that the moment had not only ecclesiastical but national dimension. Churches around the world sent letters of congratulations. Two letters received special mention: one from Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, and another from Mr. Andrew Torigian, President of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

In his remarks, Mr. Hamlet Gureghian gave thanks to God and his loved ones for the strength and support they provided to make his ordination possible. Mr. Guevork Geuvorkian pledged his ministry to the service of broken-hearted, hopeless and lost people, by offering the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Rene Leonian challenged the candidates to be faithful to the Word of God, and to accept ordination as a higher calling to ministry. Rev. Leonian, joined by the assembled clergy, then offered the prayer of ordination. The service concluded with prayers of benediction offered by the newly-ordained ministers.

On Wednesday, November 29, at the Hakob Paronian State Theater, six hundred government dignitaries, church representatives, and guests attended the first graduation exercises of the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Armenia. Founded in 1997 by the Armenian Missionary Asso-

ciation of America and the Union of Evangelical Churches in Armenia, the Seminary has enrolled sixty students from Armenia and Georgia, of whom fifteen comprised the first-ever graduating class.

Academic Dean Rev. Guevork Geuvorkian welcomed the guests

and congratulated the families of the graduates. He thanked the AMAA and all other organizations that had lent support to the Seminary, and read a letter from Mr. Andrew Torigian on behalf of the AMAA, which has fully funded the Seminary throughout its existence. Rev. Guevorkian added, "this letter fills our hearts with joy and with sorrow. We were expecting to have Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian, the Executive Director of AMAA with us, but the Lord has called his beloved servant into the eternal peace." Rev. Rene Leonian recalled Rev. Janbazian's contribution to the life of the Seminary. "Congratulating our graduates, we want to praise the Lord for Rev. Janbazian's life and ministry," he said. Rev. Janbazian's vision and enthusiasm played a vital role in the creation and operation of the Seminary; he headed the Seminary's International Advisory Board; and he had hoped to attend the historic commencement. Rev. John Zarifian, AMAA missionary in Armenia, represented the AMAA.

During the ceremonies, Mr. Sergey Vardanian, Deputy Chairman of the State Council of Religion, challenged the graduates to "light at least one candle in the spiritual darkness of Armenia, and become good



The ordination of Hamlet Gureghian and Guevork Geuvorkian.

sowers, planting the seeds of the Bible." Rev. Yuri Avanesyan, President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Armenia, encouraged the graduates to continue their self-education throughout their lives, using the Bible as their inspiration, and concluded with this challenge to the new graduates: "Remember that the beginning of wisdom, and the end of wisdom, is the fear of the Lord. Be wise!"

Dean Guevorkian charged the graduates to become evangelists, and added, "there are too many beautiful countries in the world, but the Motherland is given to us once and forever. Be people that have this sense of belonging and feel the responsibility for their homeland. Remember that the greatest commandment calls us to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Let us show the love of God through our service to our fellow Armenians."

The Dean presented the candidates to the President, who conferred upon each the degree of Bachelor of Theology. The Commencement ended with the graduates' word of promise, and a prayer of benediction offered by Rev. Yuri Avanesyan. □

AMAA-Sponsored Christmas Programs in Armenia and Karabagh

Christmas in Armenia this year once again, was joyously celebrated by children in Armenia and Karabagh thanks to the efforts of the AMAA's Orphan/Child Care Committee. Through a series of special programs organized by the AMAA, the real message of Christmas was made available to thousands of children and their parents.

This year, over 25,000 children and parents participated in Christmas programs of drama, music and Santa Clause visits, held in forty-one different locations. Sixty-seven such programs were held delighting their audience, and conveying the Christmas message of God's love and His care.

These programs were prepared and staged by AMAA's Christian Education Department's staff and volunteers and were presented by children and youth participating in AMAA Christian Education ministries.

Fourteen-thousand children received Christmas gift packages, which included school supplies, candy, toys, Christmas story activity booklets, puzzles, coloring pictures, etc. These packages were collected or purchased through the generous contributions of AMAA members and friends in the United States, through the efforts of the AMAA Summer Camp and Christmas Committee's Christmas Joy Project.

Each of the 67 programs were held at the request or cooperation of local authorities. In many locations, the media gave very favorable coverage of the programs.

AMAA Armenia Christmas programs are coordinated by AMAA Armenia office staff and supervised by AMAA representatives in Armenia - Rev. Rene Leonian, Mr. Harout Nercessian and Ms. Tamar Vassoyan.

The high quality programs often attract the attention of people. Professional drama producers and other art workers frequently compliment AMAA on these productions. In many towns, the AMAA programs are the highlights of the local Christmas activities. All these bring glory to God and promote Christianity in the minds of people in a country that used to ridicule faith in God.

In Armavir, the director of the main the-

ater, the Culture House, praised AMAA's program, confirming that it was unlike anything he had seen in his theater. He was impressed with the quality that reflected the dedication and commitment of the volunteers.

In Kapan where AMAA held a presentation for the first time, the Director of the Culture House and his assistants told of the need for spiritual "preaching" in the city.

In most towns and cities these programs are the only public celebrations of Christmas. For many children, these programs are their first exposure to the Christmas story and for many more, it is their only celebratory activity during Christmas.

The AMAA is a non-profit charitable organization serving the spiritual and physical needs of Armenian communities in 22 countries around the world. During its 82 years of service, the Association has reached out to thousands of needy people. Special care is provided to children who represent the future generation. The services of the AMAA is dependent upon the support received from caring individuals. Those who would like to support these and over 100 other activities of the Association can do so by sending their contributions to AMAA headquarters at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. All gifts are tax deductible.□



Nativity scene presented by the children of Pureghavan, Armenia (above). Santa Clause visits the children in Yerevan, Armenia (middle). Children enjoying their Christmas gifts in Askeran, Karabagh.

Samaritan's Purse Visits Armenia

by Joe and Joyce Stein

Prompted by an expressed interest in AMAA's Armenia ministry, Samaritan's Purse board members and executives joined Joe and Joyce Stein, and embarked on their first fact-finding mission to Armenia from August 8-14, 2001.

Dr. and Mrs. Melvin Cheatham, Mr. Ken Isaacs and General Hank Drewsf met with AMAA Executive Director, Rev. Movses Janbazian, AMAA Representative in Armenia rev. René Léonian, and Mr. Harout Nercessian, Deputy Representative at the Yerevan headquarters. They were briefed on AMAA projects, which address the sobering conditions and needs in Armenia. On the brighter side, the Center is a hub for medical and dental care at the sleek Aynilian complex, where medications and baby's Isomil is dispensed. Spiritual life bustles with Christian fellowship for young and old.

Days packed with intensive site visits included stops to AMAA-supported churches (there are 65 or more Evangelical Churches and fellowships), schools and orphanages. Everywhere, Samaritan's Purse was greeted with unbridled enthusiasm, and our group was deeply moved by the manifold needs.

Armavir's Boarding School is for the very poor and learning-disadvantaged. Living standards are appalling, while food and clothing barely exist. Water supply in both the school and church are at a critical point. On the upside, Armavir's church service, replete with children's choir was delightful, and afterward Pastor Garush Andonian gave us beautiful wooden *Khatchkars* intricately carved by a member of his congregation.

Sixty-five spirit-filled students are enrolled at Yerevan's Evangelical Theological Seminary. They will fill pulpits and provide Christian education for the Church's exponential growth.

In the outskirts of Yerevan, Noubarashen Orphanage and School of Special Education is home and school for extremely poor "street" boys, juvenile delinquents, and many who have been abandoned. We were impressed by the efficient administration of the institution, although it lacks acceptable American standards. We observed the de-

votion of its Principal and Vice Principal and noted that none of the staff had been paid nor funds provided for food since May.

Our travels took us to AMAA's modest Spitak Center and School where France's "Hope for Armenia" group conducted Vacation Bible School for hundreds of children. AMAA sponsors over 60 daily Vacation Bible Schools and Day camps each summer in Armenia and Karabagh.

On to Vanatzor, where Pastor Samuel Kirakosian welcomed us and where an enchanting choir regaled us with sensitive sharagans. AMAA's dental clinic in Vanatzor is a vital and much appreciated part of AMAA's humanitarian projects in Armenia. The striking, recently-constructed Stepanavan Church was packed with 500 or more parishioners, who presented us with a dramatic Christian musical featuring Pastor Ochinian's five-year-old daughter and her young friends. This Evangelical Church is the first one built in Armenia, and is a highlight of Stepanavan. The town's Mayor, in a moment of candor, lamented that it was not located in the Village Center.

In the heart of Yerevan's teeming "Bangladesh" neighborhood resides the Avedisian Evangelical Primary School. Bright, clean and inviting, this AMAA project represents the best and finest of its kind.

Aghveran Summer camp in the highlands of Armenia was inspiring. Each summer thousands of youngsters enjoy a week of fresh air, good food, loving counselors and Christian emphasis. It is similar to AMAA's camps in Stepanakert (the only Summer camp in Nagorno Karabagh) and Dilijan. These camping experiences are anxiously anticipated each year and a waiting list al-



(l to r) Rev. Rene Leonian, Mr. Ken Isaacs, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Stein, Dr. & Mrs. Melvin Cheatham, Mr. Harout Nercessian, General Hank Drewsf and Rev. Movses Janbazian.

ways exists.

Celebrating a service at the church in Hrazdan was a festive event. Again the sanctuary was filled with reverent worshippers and Pastor Edik welcomed us as special guests. Pastor Edik and his wife have eleven wonderful children. After the service we enjoyed the family fellowship at their home.

Touring the Haghtanak Village Old Age Home was the final and most disturbing visitation. The old and infirm residents are subjected to Armenia's unacceptable managed care. The lack of staff and funds to properly run the institution is painfully evident even at a cursory glance. These citizens seem to receive little attention in Armenia. The AMAA is resolved to alleviate some of the elderly's most pressing needs.

Samaritan Purse members, in observing Armenia's schools, camps and churches, are keenly aware that Armenia's children live a painfully spartan existence, one that cries for clothing, shoes and the bare necessities of water and bread. We trust they will partner with the AMAA's humanitarian endeavors.

Dr. Melvin Cheatham serves on the Board of the Billy Graham Evangelical Association and Samaritan's Purse. Ken Isaacs is director of Samaritan's Purse International Projects. General Drewsf is Vice President of Ministries. Each of these compassionate friends was impressed with the AMAA's ministry in Armenia and looks forward to assisting in any way they can. □

Armenia Revisited

by Silva Maserejian

It was with great anticipation that I traveled to Armenia for the second year to participate in the third AMAA/AEAF/AEYF-sponsored work project to Karabagh. Last year had been an overwhelming experience of meshing my spiritual walk with my physical being while consuming the culture and history of our homeland. I left knowing that I would be back.

Previous teams had repaired and reconstructed cabins and roofs at Camp Gargar, a children's camp in Stepanakert leased to the AMAA by the government of Karabagh. This camp, set in the beautiful mountains of a country landlocked by Azerbaijan but connected to Armenia in spirit (and by the Lachin Corridor), serves over 600 children every summer. Singing songs, practicing arts and crafts, and attending Bible studies, these children learn of God's love and sacrifice for them.

Our team this year consisted of four warriors for Christ: Project leader Vahak Hanessian, Paramus, NJ; Vicken Keshishian, Haverton, PA; Jayson Milnes, Fresno, CA; and Silva Maserejian, Watertown, MA. We met in Yerevan in mid-July for a couple of days of reminiscing on past trips and preparing, both physically and emotionally, for the work to come. Joined by three young men from the youth group of the Evangelical Church of Yerevan, we set off for Stepanakert to begin our service for the Lord.

Pulling into Camp Gargar, we were relieved to see the walls of the new cabin begun last year still standing. This cabin, once complete, would allow 44 more children to experience God's unconditional love in a fun and cheerful environment. Our team's goal this summer was to complete this structure in a mere couple of weeks. We were ready for the challenge.

The next two weeks saw dramatic changes at our work site and in our hearts. Blocks were added to complete the walls, handed up carefully and laid with mortar mixed by hand in a spirit of teamwork. The roof was built, the plywood laid, and the shingles nailed, while our hearts were warmed by the

thought that the children who were turned away this year due to lack of space would not be turned away in years to come.

Once the roof was complete, we moved to the inside of the building. Vahak had decided on a tray ceiling, and as the dry wall was nailed up we really began to see it come together as a livable space. Vicken rigged the electricity for the cabin, while the rest of us spackled the ceiling and helped a local expert stucco the outside walls. Vahak added some aesthetic touches to the exterior, and our building was almost complete. We did not have time to complete the indoors, but were satisfied that our goals were met.

An additional project we took on was opening windows in the kitchen facility. This may sound easy, but the walls were close to three feet thick! (Remember, this camp site used to be a military barracks!) Although our arms took a pounding, our beloved kitchen ladies were so thankful for the ventilation that it was definitely worth the effort.

Our trip to Karabagh was not all work, however. During our meals each day we interacted with the counselors and children at Camp Gargar. Always curious to our ways, they would often stare and giggle, with the bolder ones stepping forward to ask questions. One young girl, when learning I was from the United States, asked if I knew "Vicken from Los Angeles." Little did she know there are more Armenians living in Los Angeles than in all of Karabagh!

We worshipped at the magnificent church in Shushi. One memory I will always cherish is when the Der Hayr walked through the church, and a group of children rushed to him to kiss the cross. We drove through Karabagh's lush mountains and paid our respects to Babig and Dadig. We walked the streets of Stepanakert, soaking in the daily



The team of the AMAA/AEAF/AEYF sponsored work project to Karabagh.

life of our Armenian brothers and sisters. Stopping at a local café one hot afternoon, we ordered *tan* from the menu and enjoyed the cool yogurt drink while a procession of honking cars drove by in celebration of a wedding. These are the scenes that will forever be etched in my mind.

Armenia revisited, ties strengthened, mission accomplished. □

ARMENIA AWAKES

by Silva Maserejian

A dog barks, a car's trunk slams,
My Armenia awakes
Moist from sweat, I open my eyes,
Through the clouds the sun breaks

Miles away from where I call home
I feel instantly near
To where my hear will always remain
My soul, my roots are here

I see the peak of Ararat
Rising, standing proud
I hear the music of Sayat Nova
Ringing clear and loud

I shed one tear for all we've lost
Yet smile for our new start
I laugh and cheer for my homeland
Armenia awakes in my heart

With each morning of each new day
Armenia's strong and free
Praise God for staying by our side
To reach our victory.

Haigazian Women's Auxiliary Presents Gorky Program

In its tradition of planning unique programs, the Haigazian University Women's Auxiliary of Los Angeles presented author/performer Nouritza Matossian in a one-woman show on July 22 in the packed Skirball Cultural Center Theater.

After an introduction by Auxiliary President Joyce Stein, Matossian, using only a scarf and chair for props, dramatically portrayed the lives of the important women in the life of genocide survivor and famous artist Arshile Gorky. Her narrative was embellished by selected Armenian music and slides of Gorky's birthplace, family and paintings. The artistic production not only described Gorky's difficult life, it more importantly told the poignant survival story of the Armenian people.

A banquet followed in the softly lighted Skirball Courtyard with the Armenian String Quartet providing light background music. Banquet MC Grace Kurkjian introduced the evening's co-chairs Silva Hussenjjan and Ida Levy who, along with Joyce Stein, had led the board in orchestrating the details of the event. She also presented Dr. John Markarian, founding President of Haigazian Uni-

versity and his wife Inge, past president of the Women's Auxiliary. Also in attendance was Arshile Gorky's niece, Liberty Amirian Miller, with her daughter, Cheryl Bucknam.

Dr. John Khanjian, President of the University, arrived from Beirut in time for the event and delivered a brief progress report. "Due to Lebanon's depressed economy," he noted, "quite a few students are still in need of scholarships" to help them afford a higher education. Anyone interested in sponsoring a Haigazian student is welcome to contact the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) at 31 W. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652, (201) 265-2607, E-mail: amaa-inc@aol.com.

Guests were given the opportunity to purchase Matossian's book, *Black Angel, The Life of Arshile Gorky* by Overlook Press and reproductions of Gorky's *The Artist and His Mother*, commissioned by New York's



Members of HU Auxiliary surround Nouritza Matossian and niece of Arshile Gorky holding copy of the book *Black Angel*.

Whitney Museum of Art. The reproduction is from a painting inspired by the only remaining photo Gorky had of his mother Shushan, who died of starvation in Yerevan in 1919. The book @ \$40 and the 20"x28" reproduction @ \$30, are available from Haigazian University Women's Auxiliary, c/o Mrs. Julie Aharonian, 10606 Melvin Ave., Northridge, CA 91326.

During her stay in Los Angeles, Mrs. Matossian was interviewed by the Armenian press and television, and by KCET'S "Life and Times" TV program with Val Zavala and Warran Olney which aired twice. She was also interviewed by Joan Agajanian Quinn for her syndicated TV talk show "The Joan Quinn Profile."

Armenian Evangelical World Council Meets in Aleppo, Syria

The Annual Meeting of the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC) was held on August 4 and 5, 2000 at the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church of Aleppo, Syria. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Council: Revs. Megerdich Karagoezian and Avedis Boynerian, representing the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE); Rev. Joel Mikaelian, representing the Armenian Evangelical Union of France (AEUF); Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, representing the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA); and Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, the representative of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) and the Stephen Philibosian Foundation (SPF).

The participants in the meeting deliberated on a number of old and new agenda items, as well as discussed issues related to

the life, witness and service of the Armenian Evangelical Churches worldwide. Highlights of the agenda included: progress report on the preparation of a common Armenian Evangelical Pastors' Handbook; report on the revision of the common Armenian Evangelical Statement of Faith adopted in 1997; celebration of the 1700th anniversary of adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia; revision of the by-laws of the Council; clarifying and strengthening of the Armenian and Evangelical identity of the member churches of the Council; enhancement of the fellowship and cooperation between member churches; and reports from the AMAA and member church unions represented at the meeting.

The importance of celebrating the 1700th



Revs. Megerdich Karagoezian, Joel Mikaelian, Vahan Tootikian, Movses Janbazian and Avedis Boynerian.

anniversary of the Christianization of Armenia was again stressed at the Council's meeting.
(Continued on the following page)

Lucy Boyadjian Janjigian Presents Her Work at Heidelberg College

Editor's Note: This article on Mrs. Lucy Janjigian of Franklin Lakes, NJ, appeared in the Heidelberg College Bulletin of Summer 2000. Mrs. Janjigian, a Heidelberg College Alumna (class of 55) is a life-long supporter of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). She is the chairperson of the AMAA's Spiritual Life and Armenia Summer & Christmas Joy Committees and a member of the Orphan Child Care Committee. Mrs. Janjigian has traveled to Armenia several times as a short-term volunteer missionary and has directed the Arts & Crafts programs of the AMAA sponsored summer camps in Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia.

"We do not know where God leads us when He gives us an assignment with our gifts," said Lucy, echoing a sermon she had heard the night before during Heidel-



berg College's Religious Life Celebration Week, April 2-9. The Artist had returned to Heidelberg College a third time in more than 40 years to share her gifts.

As a scholarship student, Lucy came to Heidelberg in 1952 from Jerusalem. Born in British mandated Palestine to parents of Armenian descent, she knows what it means

to be a refugee. That is why she was able to speak so movingly on April 3.

In her presentation, "No Refuge: A Forum on the Plight of the Homeless and Uprooted," Lucy joined Sister Mary of Tiffin's Sisters of St. Francis and a political refugee from Central America. Lucy remembered bullets flying through her family's home that sat in 'no man's land' between the Arabs and the Jews. She remembered bombs falling and exploding nearby while she covered her ears and sang the hymn, "O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come; our shelter from the stormy blast..." It was truly storming and blasting!

She recounted a one-hour truce called by both Arab and Jewish Authorities out of respect for her father. The pause in hostilities permitted their family to move from their house to the school across the street, as that road had become an international border. Their home in Jerusalem had fallen under Israeli rule. The Anglican Mission School of St. George's where father taught was in Jordan.

In the late 1980's, Lucy shared her artwork, "The Uprooted and The Homeless" series at Heidelberg. These paintings depicted the plight of Armenian refugees forced to flee Turkish oppression in the early 1900's. The artist had been commissioned to do five paintings of the Armenian Genocide. She created 22. "It is the



Homeless "Alms" - Acrylic 26" x 32" by Lucy Janjigian.

story of man's inhumanity to man," she said, explaining the collection which she brought back to the campus. "I thank God for this gift (of painting), for through it, I have been able to sensitize people to the plight of so many souls, and I hope to paint for God's glory."

This glory was evident during a program on April 6 entitled, "Journey to Resurrection: Artistic Perspectives on Holy Week." The presentation featured Janjigian's works, "Drama in the Biblical Gardens," depicting events from the Last Supper through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

Current and former speech coaches, speech team members and music students, interpreted poetry by Boris Pasternak, Maria Rilke and others, all of which combined to present a moving performance.

A student commented that, "... the paintings of alumna Lucy were a very powerful and emotional portion of the sesquicentennial celebration." He would now be much more aware of the plight of the homeless. □

(Continued from page 8)

ing. It was reemphasized that Armenian Evangelicals everywhere mark this important milestone with special activities aimed at preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our people, and helping Armenians rededicate themselves to the faith of their forebears. It was also emphasized that Armenian Evangelicals should participate in next year's Armenian Evangelical youth conference to be held in Armenia; organize pilgrimage tours to our homeland; hold special celebratory activities; and take part as much as possible in the local celebrations organized by the Armenian Apostolic "Mother" Church.

Since the officers of the AEWEC are elected rotationally from the constituting bodies, the participants in the meeting also elected the new officers of AEWEC for biennial 2000-2002 as follows: Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, President (AEUNA); Rev. Megerdich Karagoezian, Vice President (UAECNE); Rev. Gilbert Léonian, Secretary (AEUF); Mr. George Philibosian, Treasurer. The Executive Committee of the Council will be constituted by these officers and Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, representing the AMAA, and Rev. René Léonian, the representative of the Evangelical Church

Unions of Armenia and Eurasia.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council is the worldwide fellowship of the Armenian Evangelical church unions and major service organizations. It was organized in 1981 to pursue the purposes of the former Armenian Evangelical Inter-Union Council, to affirm and strengthen the uniting bonds between Armenian Evangelical churches, and to enhance the witness and service of Armenian Evangelicals worldwide.

The AEWEC provides Armenian Evangelical churches an effective forum for dialogue, fellowship and cooperation. □

AMAA Appoints New Executive and Administrative Directors

Andrew Torigian, President, of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) announced the appointments of Rev. Jirair M. Sogomian as its new Executive Director and Mr. Dikran Youmshakian as the Administrative Director of the AMAA.

The position of AMAA Executive Director had been vacant since the untimely, premature death of the Rev. Dr. Movses B. Janbazian on Sept. 25, 2000. During his directorship of thirteen years, the AMAA experienced significant increases in worldwide missions outreach and financial strength.

Rev. Sogomian has been Pastor of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church since August, 1990. Previous ministries within the Armenian Evangelical Union include the congregational churches of Troy, NY (where he was ordained); Southfield, MI; and Downey, CA. He was also Pastor of two non-Armenian parishes of the United Church of Christ in South Windsor, CT, and Simi Valley, CA.

During 1975, and beyond the outbreak of the civil war in Beirut, Lebanon, the Rev. Sogomian was Chaplain and Professor of Religion at Haigazian College. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, in August, 1937, Rev. Sogomian studied at Haigazian and transferred to the American University of Beirut and, simultaneously, the Near East School of Theology. Receiving his B.A. at Milligan College, TN, in 1963, he continued his theological studies at Hartford Seminary, CT, from which he received his M. Div. in 1965.

Multi-lingual and known for his exceptional ability to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ, the Rev. Jirair Sogomian is equally recognized for goal-oriented administrative skills and organizational leadership.

At present the Pastor of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church of Havertown, PA, the Rev. Sogomian will assume his new post by April 1, 2001. He and his wife Lorraine (née Shamlian) have five children and three grandchildren.

The new Administrative Director, Mr. Dikran Youmshakian has been serving the AMAA for the past 16 years as Assistant Administrator and Office Manager. He is a graduate of Haigazian University, with a B.S. degree in Mathematics and Bergen Community College with an A.A. degree in Business Computer Programming.

Prior to his move to the United States in 1984, Mr. Youmshakian had served the Armenian Evangelical community in Lebanon in many capacities – teacher of Mathematics in Armenian Evangelical Schools; Editor of Chanasser and Badanegan Artzakang; member and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East; member of its Community Council; member of the Christian Endeavor Executive Committee; youth leader and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church.

Mr. Youmshakian currently is a member of the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ. He is a deacon of the church and has served on its Board of Trustees.

Mr. Youmshakian is multilingual and is familiar with the AMAA mission field. He has traveled extensively in the states, to the Middle East and Armenia. He has been involved in AMAA's Armenia Relief projects and has been instrumental in the forming of AMAA's Orphan/Child Care and Armenian Children's Milk Fund programs. He has excellent administrative skills and has a good background in computerization processes. Mr. Youmshakian is married to the former Sossi Yacoubian. They have two children. □



Rev. Jirair Sogomian

Dikran Youmshakian

Golf Tournament Benefits Armenian Children's Milk Fund

The Eighth Annual Golf Tournament to benefit the Armenian Children's Milk Fund (ACMF) was held on August 7, 2000 at the New Seabury Country Club on Cape Cod, MA. The Club's blue course, is highly regarded by golfers and has earned a four-star rating by Golf Digest.

Ms. Lynn Aznoian, the tournament organizer, arranged an eventful program. Lunch was served prior to the tournament and prizes were awarded for lowest score, longest drive and closest to the pin. The tournament was followed by a dinner, a silent auction and a raffle. The event added about \$26,000 to the assets of the ACMF.

The ACMF began raising funds to purchase infant formula for needy children in Armenia soon after the tragic earthquake of 1988. Although Armenia is now independent, the aftermath of the earthquake, along with a war with Azerbaijan over Karabagh and a blockade of Armenia by Azerbaijan and Turkey, has crippled Armenia's economy and maintained a high level of poverty. Many families are unable to provide their children with proper nutrition. The ACMF represents an active group of volunteers who are committed to helping needy infants in Armenia. The purpose of the ACMF is to provide life-saving nutrition - in the form of Isomil infant formula - for those infants who do not tolerate milk and whose families are too poor to afford alternatives. The current members of the ACMF's Executive Committee are: Attorney, Jeanmarie Papelian (Chairperson), Seta Kalajian (Treasurer), Harvey Bazarian, Elaine Kasparian, Khachadoor Kajoian, Marilyn Kajoian, Raffi Manjikian, Karnik Ostayan, Linda Ostayan, Judy Shagoury, Aetna Tashjian and Natalie Zakarian. The ACMF works in partnership with the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) to make sure that the neediest and most vulnerable children in Armenia get a healthy start in life.

Those who wish to help the Armenian Children's Milk Fund may send their tax deductible donations to the AMAA, earmarked for Armenian Children's Milk Fund and mail to 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. □

AMAA Orphan/Child Care Committee Members Raise over \$50,000 in Boston

The Sixth Annual fundraiser to benefit AMAA's Orpha/Child Care programs was held on Wednesday, October 18, 2000 at the Brae Burn Country Club in Newton, MA. This successful event which was made possible through the dedicated labors of the AMAA Orpha/child Care Boston Committee members, raised more than \$50,000.

This year's event was significant with the beauty of centerpiece items which were placed on each table. 200 ladies sitting around the tables silently auctioned these items and gave generously in support of the needy children in Armenia and Karabagh. Along with the centerpieces, there was a live auction of several other items which were all donated for fundraising purposes. Mr. Jeff Barnd, Co-Anchor of WB56 TV in Boston, ran the auction.

Rev. Rene Leonian, AMAA representative in Armenia and Mr. Dikran Youmshakian from AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ, both participated in the event presenting brief report on the activities supported by AMAA Orphan/Child



Jeff Barnd, Co-Anchor of WB56 TV in Boston running the live auction.

Care in Armenia.

A word of gratitude is appropriate to all the participants and supporters of the event,

to all those who donated the centerpieces and the live auction items, and specially to those who organized this successful event. □

"Glory Festival 2001"

As we all are aware, 2001 is a very memorable year for us Armenians throughout Christendom worldwide, as we celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the proclamation of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia in 301 AD.

David's Tabernacle Christian Arts Ministry, headed by Sylvia Kutchukian, will sponsor a unique event called: "Glory Festival 2001" on Sunday, June 3rd 4:00pm, in Albany's Hart Theatre at The Egg. Members of both the Armenian Apostolic and Protestant churches in the Capital Region have enthusiastically joined in the production of this event. We invite you to mark your calendars and plan to join us in celebration of our rich legacy of Christian faith..

The program will be extravagant both in content and participation. Local and out of town clergy, distinguished guests, such as the Rev. Bishop Howard Hubbard of the Catholic Diocese and other dignitaries, will bring their greetings and exhortations. Rev. Mihran Kupeyan, newly appointed minister of the United Armenian Calvary Congregational Church in Troy, NY and Rev. Stepanos Doudoukjian of St. Peter's Armenian Apostolic Church in Watervliet, NY, will be two of the main speakers. The highlight of the evening will focus on our youth, both in music and drama. The children's choir, joined by the Arme-

nian School students, will sing several Armenian songs, followed by the teen group in the original drama, **"Children of the Morning"**, written by the well known Diane R. Bairamian, depicting the conversion of Armenia through St. Gregory. Other aspects of God's grace given to this ancient nation of simple folks, then living at the foot of the Ararat mountain, will be presented in dance, music, dramatic readings and slides.

The booths in the lobby will display various cultural and spiritual artifacts passed down to us by our forefathers.

Admission is free. All the proceeds from the event will go solely to the children's orphanages and their Christian education in Armenia through the CASP and AMAA offices. Your donations will be gratefully received towards making both this historical production and our efforts to reach out to the children in Armenia, one to be cherished for years to come.

For additional Information write or call to:

Sylvia Kutchukian
David's Tabernacle Inc.
POBox 11300
Loudonville, NY 12211-0300
Tel.: (518) 459-3152
E-mail: arts@davidstabernacle.com

1700-ամեակի խոհեր

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Տիգրան Նուշաֆեան

«Ուրեմն ո՞վ պիտի գատէ մեզ Քրիստոսի սերէն, տառապանքը, կամ նեղութիւնը, կամ հալածանքը, կամ սո՞վը, կամ մերկութիւնը, կամ վտանգը, կամ սո՞ւրբը:» Հռոմ. 8.35

Այս գիտակցութեամբ է որ Հայ ժողովուրդը 1700 տարիներ շարունակ, ի գին ամէն զոհողութեան կոցաւ կարչած մնալ Քրիստոնէական այն հաւատքին զոր որպէս պետութիւն ընդունեց 301 թուականին: Եւ այսօր Հայ ազգը գոհունակութեամբ կը նշէ պատմական այս անկիւնադարձին տարեդարձը եւ գլուխ կը խոնարհեցնէ Քրիստոնէութեան հաւատարիմ ծառաներու յիշատակին:

Այս տարեդարձը նոյն ժամանակ առիթ մը կուտայ իւրաքանչիւր Հայու պահ մը ետ նայելու, խորհրդածելու եւ արժեւորելու այս իրականութիւնը:

Պատմութեան մէջ Հայ ժողովուրդը առաջինը եղաւ Քրիստոնէութիւնը որպէս պետական կրօն հռչակելու 1700 տարիներ առաջ՝ շնորհիւ Սուրբ Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչի տեսիլքին ու Տրդատ Գ. Թագաւորի հանդգնութեան: Եւ ան որպէս ազգ եղաւ առաջինը վճարելու Քրիստոնէութեան գինը հետեւելով Քրիստոսի զոհողութեան օրինակին:

Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ ինք վճառեց գինը տարիներ շարունակ իւր Վիրապին մէջ տառապելով: Տրդատ Գ. Թագաւորը վճարեց խելագարած հիւանդութենէ տառապելով: Վարդան Մամիկոնեան եւ իր զինուորները վճառեցին Աւարայրի դաշտին վրայ իրենց մահով: Հայ ժողովուրդը վճառեց դարեր շարունակ ենթարկուելով տառապանքի, հալածանքի, նեղութեան, սովի, մերկութեան, սուրի եւ ջարդի: Հայաստանի մէջ 70 տարիներ շարունակ ենթարկուելով անաստուածութեան, իսկ վերջին 10 տարիներուն պատերազմի եւ չորհրդակցութեան: Մէկ խօսքով՝ Քրիստոնէութիւն մեծ զոհողութեամբ:

Քրիստոնէութիւնը զոհողութիւն ենթադրող կրօն է անկասկած: Վկայ Քրիստոսը որ ինչին վրայ վճառեց գինը, իր արիւնը թափելով մարդ արարածի մեղքերուն համար:

Սակայն, Քրիստոնէութիւնը նաեւ յաղթանակի կրօն է, վկայ Յարութեամբ Քրիստոսը: Քրիստոնէութիւնը հիմնուած է այն սոսկ հաւատքին վրայ թէ ի գին բոլոր զոհողութիւններուն Քրիստոնեան ի վերջոյ կ'ըլլայ յաղթական, որովհետեւ «Եթէ Աստուած մեր կողմն է, ո՞վ պիտի ըլլայ մեզի հակառակ:» (Հռոմ. 8.31):

Այսօր երբ հպարտութեամբ կը նշուի 1700-ամեայ տարեդարձը, իւրաքանչիւր Հայ անհատ որքա՞ն պատրաստ է վճառելու Քրիստոնէութեան գինը:

Հայ ժողովուրդը ներկայիս բաղդատաբար կը գտնուի աւելի բարենպաստ պայմաններու մէջ: Հակառակ բոլոր դժուարութիւններուն, հայրենիքը անկախ է եւ կը վայելէ խղճի եւ կրօնի ազատութիւն: Հայ սփիւռքը աւելի նպաստաւոր պայմաններու մէջ կը վայելէ բարեկեցիկ կեանք: Եւ տակաւին ունի 1700 տարիներու Քրիստոնէական հաւատքի փորձառութիւն: այս բոլորով հանդերձ, իւրաքանչիւր Հայ որքա՞ն աւելի Քրիստոնեայ է եւ որքա՞ն պատրաստ է վճարելու Քրիստոնէութեան իր պարտքի բաժինը:

Միացեալ Նահանգներու մէջ ոչ տառապանքը, ոչ նեղութիւնը, ոչ հալածանքը, ոչ սովը, ոչ մերկութիւնը եւ ոչ ալ

սուրը վճառելի գին է պահելու Քրիստոնէական անձնական հաւատքը: Սակայն կան փառափրութիւն, պատեհապաշտութիւն, անհամերաշխութիւն, անհասկացողութիւն, նախանձ: Եւ այս բոլորը ոչ միայն անմիջական չըջանակներու մէջ, այլ մինչեւ իսկ եկեղեցական եւ ընտանեկան կեանքի մէջ:

Արդեօ՞ք Հայ անհատը յօժար է վճառելու այս վտանգներէն հեռու մնալու գինը: Այսինքն մոռնալու իր բոլոր տարակարծութիւնները ու անհասկացողութիւնները, անտեսելու իր անձնական շահերը եւ փոխարէն իր անձը կենդանի գոհ մատուցանելու Աստուծոյ:

Բաղդատած սփիւռքի, Հայ ժողովուրդի գաւակները Հայրենիքի մէջ ենթակայ են վտանգի՝ դիմագրաւելով տնտեսական մեծ տապալակ: Ի գին մեծ զոհողութիւններու Հայրենիքը կը պայքարի պահելու իր պետականութիւնը: Սակայն իւրաքանչիւր Հայ թէ Հայաստանի եւ թէ Սփիւռքի մէջ որքա՞ն պատրաստ է մասնակից ըլլալու այդ զոհողութիւններուն, բաժնեկցելու ցաւերը, օժանդակելու նիւթապէս եւ բարոյապէս: Աստուած մի արասցէ, եթէ կորսնցնենք Հայաստանը, ի գոհը հպարտացած կ'ըլլանք պետական կրօնի 1700-ամեակով: 1700-ամեակի յիշատակութեան բոլոր արարքները անիմաստ կ'ըլլան եթէ իւրաքանչիւր Հայ, որպէս անհատ պատրաստ չըլլայ իր անձնական շահերը զոհելու Աստուծոյ ու Հայրենիքին համար:

Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին եւ Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութիւնը այս գիտակցութեամբ է որ մասնակից կ'ըլլան յիշատակելու Հայաստանէն ներս Քրիստոնէութեան ճանաչման տարեդարձը, եւ Հայաստանեայց Սայր Եկեղեցւոյ հետ միատեղ կ'աշխատին վերականգնացնելու այս հաւատքը Հայրենիքին մէջ: Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան ամէն մէկ անդամ գիտակից ըլլալով այս իրականութեան մասնակից կ'ըլլայ այս սուր պարտականութեան:

Հայ ժողովուրդի պատմութեան մէջ եղած են նման պայմաններ եւ պատեհութիւններ: Անցեալին ալ Հայ ազգը ենթակայ եղած է վտանգներու: Սակայն ան Քրիստոնէական հաւատքը պահած է ամէն բանէ վեր: Ի գին ամէն զոհողութեան, գոյատեւած է երբ մեծ ազգեր ու զօրաւոր պետութիւններ կորսուած են պատմութեան էջերէն: Ինչպէս անցեալին, այսօր ալ Աստուծոյ շնորհքով ու Անոր վստահելով կարելի է ներկայ վտանգները դիմագրաւել:

Քրիստոնէութեան 1700-ամեայ շրջանը ենթադրած է մեծ զոհողութիւններ եւ պիտի ենթադրէ աւելի մեծ զոհողութիւններ, մասնաւոր ներկայ դարուն երբ տարբեր հոսանքներ կը վտանգեն մեր նոր սերունդներուն հոգիները: Միայն մեր անձնական օրինակելի կեցուածքով մենք կրնանք հաստատ պահել ապագայ սերունդները եւ առիթ տալ անոնց որ յիշատակեն նոր հազարամեակներու տարեդարձներ: Մեր նախնիքները կրցած են փոխանցել մեզի Քրիստոնէութեան հաւատքը: Մենք որչա՞փ պատրաստ ենք նոյնը եւ աւելին ընել:

1700-ամեակը պատշաճօրէն եւ հպարտութեամբ կրնանք նշել եթէ մենք այսօր մեր մէջ կ'ունենանք խոնարհ հոգի, զոհողութեան պատրաստակամութիւն, եւ զօրաւոր հաւատքով կարչած կը մնանք Քրիստոսի ու Քրիստոնէական սկզբունքներուն:

ՊՈՒԼԿԱՐԻՈՅ ՀԱՅ ԱԻԵՏԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻՆԵՐՈՒ ՄԱՆՈՒԿՆԵՐՈՒ ԲԱՆԱԿՈՒՄԸ

Հինգերորդ տարին է որ Պուլկարիոյ Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիները Վիթոշա լեռան ստորոտը գտնուող զանազան հանգստատուներու մէջ բանակում կը կազմակերպեն 8-16 տարեկան երեխաներու համար՝ զանոնք դաստիարակելու ազգային ոգիով ու հաւատքով: Այս տարի ալ մօտ 80 մանուկներ Յուլիս 17-27 հաւաքուեցան «Իլիքա» հիդակին մէջ:

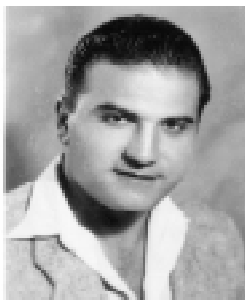
Այս բանակումները կ'օժանդակուին Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան կողմէ: Սարգիս Յովհաննէսեան՝ Սօֆիայէն, Մաննիկ Գոյումճեան՝ Փլովտիլէն եւ Գալուստ Տէմիրճեան՝ Վառնայէն կրօնական դասեր դասաւանդեցին՝ Աստուածաշունչի շուրջ մեկնաբանութիւններ տուին, դէպի տարբեր գեղատեսիլ վայրեր արշաւներ կազմակերպեցին եւ ճիգ թափեցին համատեղելու հաճելի եւ օգտակարը:



ՄԱՀԱԳՐՈՒԹԻՒՆՔ

ԾԵՐՈՆ ԾԵՐԻ ՀԵՔԻՄԵԱՆ

Ծերոն Հեքիմեան ծնած է Դեկտ. 6, 1921-ին, Ճոզեֆ եւ Նվարդ Հեքիմեաններու ընտանիքին, Քեսապ, Սուրիա: Հայրը իր ուսումը ստացած է Ամերիկա եւ ապա իր ծննդավայրը վերադառնալէ ետք գացած է Պաղատա որպէս դպրոցի տնօրէն:



Այնտեղ հիւանդանով մահացած է իր երիտասարդ հասակին մէջ: Հինգ տարեկան Ծերոնը եւ փոքր եղբայրը՝ Արամը, որք մնալով, իրենց մեծ մօր եւ մայրիկին խնամքին տակ մեծցած են: Քեսապի Հայ Աւետարանական վարժարանը աւարտելէ ետք, Ծերոն ընդունուած է Հալէպի Ամերիկեան Տղոց Գոլէնը: Գոլէնը աւարտելէ ետք, ան դասաւանդած է Քեսապի վարժարանին մէջ: Միեւնոյն ժամանակ ծառայած է նաեւ որպէս եկեղեցիի հոգաբարձութեան անդամ: Հինգ տարի ուսուցչութիւն ընելէ ետք մեկնած է ԱնդրՅորդանան եւ հոն աշխատած է ութ տարիներ որպէս քարիւղի ընկերութեան մը պաշտօնեան: Գործին մէջ պարտաճանաչ, հաւատարիմ, վստահելի եւ համեստ ըլլալով սիրուած է բոլորին կողմէ:

Ամերիկա գալու փափաքով, ձգած է գործը եւ եկած ու հաստատուած է Լոս Անճելըս, Քալիֆորնիա: Հոն աշխատած է Արտէն Մէյֆեր ընկերութեան: Յունիս 27, 1973-ին ամուսնացած է Օր. Եսթեր Մկրտիչեանի հետ: Ծերոնը, Քեսապի Ուսումնասիրաց Միութեան հիմնադիր անդամներէն մէկը ըլլալով, տիկնոջ հետ միասին ծառայած են այդ Միութեան քանի մը տարիներ: Տարիներու ֆրոնտալն

աշխատանքէ ետք, Ծերոնն ու Եսթերը Յունուար 6, 1989-ին փոխադրուած են Ֆրեզնո: Մայիս 9, 1996-ին, արտի կաթուածով կորսնցուցած է եղբայր՝ Արամ:

Վերջին վեց տարիներուն, Օերոնին ալ առողջութիւնը վատթարացաւ: Ան հանգիստ բնադրութեամբ բարի, ազնիւ, գիտակից, Աստուածավախ, արդար ու մաքուր կեանք մը ապրեցաւ: Ան լաւատես էր: Ամէն անգամ որ իր որպիսութիւնը հարցուէր, «Առաջուրնէ աւելի լաւ եմ» կ'ըսէր: Ափսոս որ անբուժելի դաժան հիւանդութենէն քարոզութիւններ յառաջացան եւ իր կեանքի թելը կտրուեցաւ Մայիսի 10, 2000-ին: Իր անմահ յիշատակը անթառամ պիտի մնայ շատ շատերու սրտերուն եւ հոգիներուն մէջ:

ԱԻԵՏԻՍ ԸԱՆԼԵԱՆ

Արծուարոյն Զէյթունի մէջ, 1920-ին, զարնանային օր մը Շանլեան գոյգը Տիգրան եւ Ռահել կ'օրհնուին մանչ զաւակով մը, զայն կ'անուանեն Աւետիս, եւ այդ ձեւով մեծ հօր անունը կը շարունակուի ընտանիքէն ներս: Տարի մը ետք, Զէյթունի երկրորդ տարագրութեան, փոքրիկն Աւետիս իր ծնողքին հետ կը հասնի Հալէպ: Մինչ անտոյգ ապագայի իրավիճակը կը մղէ ծառերու տակ ձգել մնացեալ զաւակները:

Իր անտիպ գրութիւններէն կը հասկնանք թէ մանկապարտէզի ու մախկրթարանի օրերը անցուցած է Հալէպի Բեթէլ վարժարանը եւ ապա Հալէպի Գոլէնը: Գոլէնը աւարտելէ ետք Մանրութեան պաշտօն կը վարէ Թէլ Ապետեանի եւ Այս Արուսի դպրոցներէն ներս, ապա կը վերադառնայ Հալէպ ու կը ծառայէ Մեսրոպեան վարժարանէն ներս որպէս Արաբերէնի ուսուցիչ:

Այդ տարիներուն Վեր. Սանատրուկ

Շանլեան Ամերիկայէն գալով, կը խօսի Աւետիսին կեանքի ամենակարեւոր միւթին՝ վերստին ծնունդի մասին: Երիտասարդ Աւետիս կ'ընդունի Տէր Յիսուսը որպէս փրկիչ ու Վեր. Շանլեանի ձեռքով կը մկրտուի Եղբայրութեան եկեղեցիին մէջ: Սակայն իր ընկերային շրջանակը չեն մպաստեր իր հոգեւոր կեանքին ու յաջորդող տարիները անտարբեր կ'ըլլան:

Ժամանակ մը Անգլիական բանակին ծառայելէ ետք, քարտուղարական պաշտօն կը ստանձնէ Գասարեան եւ Գասպարեան հաստատութիւններէն ներս:

1950-ին կ'ամուսնանայ Մարկանեան ընտանիքի դուստրերէն Վիթորիայի հետ: Աստուած զիրենք կ'օրհնէ չորս զաւակներով, Անի, Տիգրան, Անդրանիկ եւ Արա:

1953-ին Հալէպի Մէլտան շրջանին մէջ խանութ մը կը բանայ: Նոյն ժամանակ Դամասկոսի մէջ քննութիւն կուտայ Մէլտանի մամակատան տնօրէն ըլլալով:

1976-ին շատ մը սփիւռփառներու մեծ կը հասնի Ամերիկա եւ կ'աշխատի Ֆետֆօ հաստատութեան մէջ, մինչեւ իր հանգստեան կոչուիլը՝ 74 տարիքին:

Ան որոշ ժամանակ մը Հալէպի Բեթէլ դպրոցի հոգաբարձութեան մաս կազմած է: Գրական կարողութիւններով օժտուած ըլլալով ստորագրած է շատ մը յօդուածներ տարբեր գրական եւ ազգային միութեան շուրջ, եւ վերջին տարիներուն միութեանը հոգեւոր էին:

Տէրը հանեցաւ զինք վերահաստատել ու յիշեցնել «առաջուն սէրը»: Աստուած զարմանալի կերպով գործեց, հասցուց ուր որ պիտի ըլլար եւ ընտանիքն ալ պատրաստեց տիւր բաժանումին:

Տէրունական առաւօտուն Յուլիսի 30-ին Աւետիս Եղբայր Շանլեան երկնագնաց եղաւ, 80 պանդխտական տարիներ բոլորելէ ետք:

Elizabeth Egoyan

Elizabeth Egoyan Bedrosian passed away December 19, 1999. She was born in 1907 in a village of Khouloo near Kharpert, Armenia into the family of Krikor and Marineh Egoyan (Yeghayan).



Her husband of 31 years, Moorad Bedrosian preceded her in death. Elizabeth lived and survived the terrible time by God's Grace, as shown by German Missionaries led by the famous Reverend ("Ehman") Aman, who made the decision to save the Egoyan (Yeghayan) families by accepting them in the missionary compound.

She spent her childhood years in the Danish Birds' Nest Orphanage in Beirut, Lebanon. Elizabeth journeyed to Providence, Rhode Island and then to Fresno, California in 1927. Elizabeth and Moorad were married in Fresno at the First Armenian Presbyterian Church in 1931. They worked together in farming in Parlier, California, then moved to Fowler, California where she resided for 56 years.

Elizabeth enjoyed life to its fullest and loved people of all walks.

She was a life member of the AMAA and has made a gift of \$10,000 for the AMAS's Orphan/Child Care Fund in Armenia.

Elizabeth is survived by her children, Clara and husband, Lee Bousian, Ernest and wife, Carlotta Bedrosian, Krikor Y. and wife Katherine Bedrosian, and 8 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Armenouhi Torunian

Mrs. Armenouhi Torunian, wife of Anton Torunian, died at the age of 81, on Thursday, July 6, 2000 in Montreal, Canada.

Armenouhi Kazezian, a native of Lebanon, and Anton Torunian were married in Haifa, Palestine fifty seven years ago. Anton and Armenouhi moved to Montreal Canada, via England on July 1, 1953. They were founding members of the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal, and always involved in leadership positions. The Torunians were known for helping newcomers acquire jobs and for giving moral support.

Armenouhi was a gentle and genteel individual; a very gracious hostess, always hospitable, and supportive of her husband, family, ministers and missionaries. Her faithfulness to her Lord Jesus Christ had helped her grow

in grace and knowledge with God and man. Indeed, Anton and Armenouhi represented the best in Christian statesmanship. The last years, though fragile physically, Armenouhi's indomitable spirit gave her the resiliency to continue serving.

Arousiag Goenjian (nee Aivazian)

Arousiag Goenjian passed away on Sunday, September 10, 2000 (the eve of her 90th birthday), in Redondo Beach, CA. Funeral services were held on Friday, Sept. 15, 2000.

She is survived by her brother Dr. and Mrs. Garabed Aivazian and family. Son in law and daughter, Dr. and Mrs. Walid and Hilda Ghurabi and grandchildren; Micheline, Ranya, Tamar and Raffi. Son Dr. Armen and Azniv Goenjian and grandchildren; Lara, Haig and Shahan. Son in law and daughter George K. and Hasmig Mandossian. Sisters in law Mrs. Armenouhi Salibian and Ani Goenjian. Brother in law the Rev. James Spence and family. Also members of the Goenjian, Aivazian, Dombourian, Garmirian, Tavitian, Yerganian, Ghurabi, Kazanjian and Mandossian families.

Donations in lieu of flowers were sent to the AMAA.

Rev. Yacoub Afrem Iwas Shekerji

Yacoub Afrem Iwas Shekerji was born to Afrem & Lucia on June 6th 1917 in Urfa, Turkey. He was the youngest child among an older brother, AbdulNoor and two sisters, Sarah & Manush. In



1924, the family immigrated to Aleppo, Syria as refugees. The family settled in the Assyrian Community of 'Barakkat Al-Syrian'. Yacoub's primary education was at the Assyrian Orthodox School of Aleppo, where he studied in Syriac, Arabic and French. His family being very poor, he started to work as an apprentice jeweler at a very young age. At age twenty, under Rev. Tovmassian's ministry, he re-affirmed his faith and was born again as a Christian. His first ministry was to teach Sunday school within the community. Some of his notable Sunday school students were his future wife, Mary Hajjar, Rev. Peter Doghramji, and Rev. Habib Alajaji. He started to learn watch repair to supplement his income and support his ministering. He started to minister door to door in the community.

On November 17, 1944 Rev. Yacoub married Mary Hajjar. Within a year, the new

couple traveled to Beirut, Lebanon, at which time they lost their first-born son. They returned to Aleppo, Syria in 1947, where they were blessed with the birth of their second son, Abel. Yacoub and his family moved back to Beirut, Lebanon and he began to minister for the Bible Society, by selling Bibles throughout the villages of Lebanon. During his commute on the Beirut Tramways, he started the self-study of the English language. They lost four more children at birth. In early 1950, he entered the Nazarene Bible School. Upon graduation, he was appointed as minister of the Aleppo Armenian Nazarene Church. In 1960 he was ordained by the Nazarene Church in Damascus, Syria. In 1961, at the request of Rev. Tovmassian of the United States, he moved to Lebanon to minister the large Assyrian Community in Beirut. During this period in Lebanon, he entered the Near East School of Theology and furthered his education at the Haigazian College and the American University of Beirut. Due to financial difficulties and work pressures he stopped his education, just short of a BA in Theology. In 1967, Yacoub fulfilled his lifelong dream of visiting the house of his birth in Urfa, Turkey.

In February 1968, Rev. Yacoub and his family immigrated to Los Angeles, CA. Throughout the years, he was invited to preach at local Armenian Evangelical Churches. He also started his 'Pamphlet' ministry and for the last fifteen years, was very active in writing Christian pamphlets and mailing them throughout the world. Within the last six years, with his failing health and kidney dialysis, he continued his ministry by writing Christian Pamphlets and mass mailings. Just a few hours before his passing, he was attempting to stuff thousands of his last written pamphlets in envelopes. On Friday November 24, 2000 at 11:30 AM, God decided that his servant had fulfilled his ministries and called him to Heaven for the rewards. Rev. Yacoub is now reunited in heaven, with his five children, his sisters, and his older brother, AbdulNoor, who also died during Thanksgiving, 10 years earlier, of similar kidney complications.

Alice Esaian Hakimian

Alice Esaian Hakimian, age 96, formerly of Troy, died Monday, October 23, 2000 at the Albany County Nursing Home. Born in Aintab, Turkey and educated in Troy, she was the widow of Avedis Hakimian, and the daughter of the late Harry and Rebecca Vartanian-Esaian. She was employed by Cluett Peabody in Troy, retiring in 1949. She was a partner in the A & A Hakimian Holding Company. She

was a member of the United Armenian Calvary Congregational Church in Troy and was active in the Ladies Aid Society of the church for many years. Mrs. Hakimian was a life member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

She is survived by a son, Harry Hakimian of Albany; a sister, Virginia Esaian-Noga of Brunswick; four grandchildren; two nephews; one niece; and several great-nieces and nephews and great-great-nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a son, George Hakimian, Sr.; a daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Stephens Hakimian; a daughter, Anna Hakimian; four sisters, Florence Esaian, Gladys Esaian, Lydia Esaian-Darmanjian and Rose Esaian Manoukian; three brothers, Harry Esaian, Charles Esaian and George Esaian; and two nieces, Rachel Manoukian-Dudley and Florence Manoukian-Brooks.

Funeral services were held in the Lasak and Gigliotti Funeral Home and at the United Armenian Calvary Congregational Church, of Troy, NY.

Remembrances, in Alice's name, were sent to the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

Louise (Fermanian) Boyajian

Louise Boyajian, 67, of Brockton, the wife of Vahan "Barney" Boyajian, died Thursday at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital after a period of failing health.

Born in Providence, R.I., she was the daughter of Violet (Avedisian) Fermanian and the late Samuel Fermanian.

In addition to her husband and mother, she is survived by two daughters and a son, Mrs. David (Judy) Manoogian of North Attleboro, Mrs. Walter (Nancy L.) Anoushian of North Kingstown, R.I., and Dr. Stephen S. Boyajian of Medford, N.J.; two brothers, Jack Fermanian of Boynton Beach, FL, and Samuel Fermanian of Peabody; 10 grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

For many years Mrs. Boyajian was a member of the First Armenian Church in Belmont, MA. She was also a member of the Commercial Club and the Armenian Cultural Society.

She passed away on December 14, 2000. Her memorial service of celebrating her transition from this life to life eternal was officiated by Rev. Soghomon Nuyujukian on December 18, 2000.

Mrs. Boyajian's heart of love for others was demonstrated daily in her life of serving others with a genuine spirit. "Whosoever be greatest among you, let him be a servant of all." (Matthew 20:27).

Zarouhie (Zee) Chopourian Trott

(Sept. 29, 1917-Dec. 23, 2000)

by Giragos H. Chopourian

Mrs. Trott was born in Adana, a prominent town of the Rupenian Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia established in 1080 A.D. by an Armenian noble named Rupen. The kingdom collapsed in 1453 when the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople and subjugated the Armenians by 1473 for the next 445 years, finally ending it with the Genocide of its people. Zee's greater travails began in 1921, when abandoning farms, two houses, horses and everything else, her parents self-exiled themselves and three children to the British Colony of Cyprus. Refugee life was tough. Living on the sale of Mother's jewelry for a couple of years, the family finally found a niche, added twins (boy and girl) and hungrily opted for whatever education they could get. Zee graduated from the Armenian elementary church school and the American Academy (an American Mission High School). Graduating from the Nursing School of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon in 1939, she became surgical nurse until 1941, and served as chief nurse at the Howard Karagheuzian clinic in Beirut for a year. In 1942 she joined the hospital of an asbestos mining company perched on a high-altitude mountain village and a year later in 1943 she shifted to the hospital of another mining company, the Cyprus Mines Corporation, whose product was copper. From 1943 to 1957 she was matron (head nurse) and served also as sister at the surgical theater operating room.

Married in May, 1959 to Arthur Trott, Zee settled in England and adopted two children, Hilda and Peter, from Lebanon. She provided a hospitable and loving home, exposed her two children to an evangelical church, became a grandmom to Peter's daughter Jade and made generous provisions for their future. Zee was a guardian angel for all the members of the Chopourian family, meeting their social and financial needs when necessary.

Her sister, Azadouhie (Aye), was always a phone-call away to help even though they were a hundred or more miles apart. Peter and Hilda, two gentle souls ever thankful for the love bestowed on them, stood by to help. Peter, with a great capacity for music, delighted her. He did a yeoman job of taking care of her in her last painful and depressing days, arranging for a 24-hour round the clock service at the home she loved so much. Garo, twin brother of Aye who lived in Cyprus, was equally sensitive to Zee's needs, paying yearly and half-yearly visits and brother Loutfig did

the same each time he was in Manchester for business.

Each one of us is born with God's multiple gifts and Zee had many of them – patience, endurance, capacity for suffering, determination, caring and loving. She had them all. Her whole life was structured on what Jesus emphasized: Love of God and neighbor. The answer Jesus gave to the scribe who asked him "which is the first commandment of all?" was two (Mark 12: 29-31): To love God totally and the neighbor as ourselves. And he said, "There is none other commandment greater than these." Zee lived her life believing in and living by those commandments.

Zee reached out to her family, friends in her church, and neighbors with sincerity and compassion. Despite being exiled from her homeland, she aspired for excellence and achieved it. She moved beyond survival to professional excellence. With her abundant love she made the life of little ones deprived of love to enjoy life fully. She was God's child, and her God will recognize her contributions and give her the crown of victory.

All of us will miss her badly, especially we of her immediate extended family – the Chopourians, Blacks, Trotts, Stepheys, Baileys, Gehrts, Jarjisians.

We shall cherish her sweet memory.

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA News:

* Bedrosian, Avedis	May. 25, 2000
* Zerounian, Harutun Aleppo, Syria	May 31, 2000
* Nahigian, Marie Belmont, MA	June 17, 2000
** Hadidian Arshalous Fresno, CA	July 5, 2000
* Tokatlian, Hrantouhi Watertown, MA	July 16, 2000
* Chekijian, Mary Arlington, MA	July 31, 2000
* Kassab, Flora Sunnyside, NY	July 31, 2000
* Karamanlian, Jean N. Hollywood, CA	Aug. 26, 2000
* Manasian, Anitza Mission Hills, CA	Sept. 8, 2000
* Chankalian, Vahan Leonina, NJ	Sept. 15, 2000
* Bilezikian, Paul Newtonville, MA	Oct. 3, 2000

* **Memorials were designated for AMAA**
****Bequests Assigned**

"SEARCH FOR SNEAKERS"

Sneakers are so common here that parents buy a few pairs each year for each child in their household. However, sneakers in Armenia are a rare commodity as most families can not afford to buy even a single pair.

Out of 7500 children attending AMAA Summer Camps in Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia last year, only a few had sneakers. Many did not even have a pair of decent footwear.

The Armenia Summer Camps Committee as part of its preparation for Summer Camps 2001, has embarked on a "Search for Sneakers" program this year for children attending summer camps in Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia. The AMAA organized summer camps are one of the major projects of the Orphan/Child Care Committee. Each year, over 7000 children attend these camps and participate in sports

and arts & crafts activities. They associate with other children in their age group. They enjoy nutritious meals, fresh air and comfortable beds. They also learn about their Christian heritage and about Jesus Christ. A pair of sneakers will be of much needed help.

Would you kindly participate in this "Search for Sneakers" project, by providing a pair(s) of new sneakers for boys and girls ages 8-18, or make a contribution for us to buy a pair or more. Children will really appreciate and will smile when their little feet feel the comfort of the sneakers you donate.

Sneakers or your donations may be sent to the Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 by April 15, 2001.

Yes, I would like to provide sneakers for children attending AMAA camps in Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia. Enclosed please find:

----- *pair(s) of sneakers*

----- *U.S. dollars for sneakers*

Name -----

Address -----

(Please make tax-deductible checks payable to AMAA, earmarked for "Search for Sneakers")

Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652

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